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Governor Sean Parnell
STATE OF ALASKA

August 7, 2009

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
Broadband Technology Opportunities Program
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
United States Department of Commerce
HCHB, Room 4812
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Mr. Dallas Tonsager
Under Secretary for Rural Development
Broadband Initiatives Program
Rural Utilities Service
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Stop 1599
Washington, DC 20250

Re: Broadband Technology Opportunities Program

Dear Mr. Strickling and Mr. Tonsager,

Alaska sits squarely within the purposes set forth in the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under Section 6001 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Broadband infrastructure in Alaska is particularly important because it may represent the only opportunity for economic growth and job creation in many of our remote, rural communities. Additionally, broadband access in rural Alaska is critical for public safety, access to health care, and for providing educational opportunities.

Broadband infrastructure and access are vital to Alaska as traditional infrastructure, such as roads connecting communities, often does not and may not ever, exist. We see access to broadband as a 21st century technology that, in many cases, can be a substitute for the infrastructure of the 19th and 20th centuries that may be difficult and prohibitively expensive to construct and maintain in Alaska.

When it comes to broadband access, Alaska residents are the most unserved and underserved population in the United States. Public safety agencies in rural Alaska do not have interoperable communications. The unemployment rate in these areas is consistently higher than anywhere within the contiguous 48 states. In rural Alaska, access to health care and educational opportunities are limited, but both have expanded in communities with reliable broadband service. Finally, Alaska's ability to provide rural

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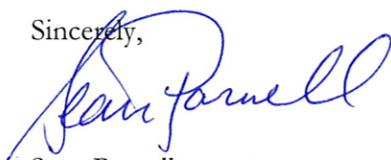
schools with a full range of courses and with access to highly qualified teachers is dependent on its broadband infrastructure.

I understand that several Alaska entities may file broadband applications with the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) or the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). Some of these may be in competition with each other; others will not be. Further, some proposals will encompass broad geographic areas of the state while others will focus on a more limited number of communities.

I believe you will find that the Alaska applications are designed to address the important social and economic needs of the state of Alaska. I commend each application to your attention and know that you will give them the careful study they deserve.

Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,



Sean Parnell
Governor